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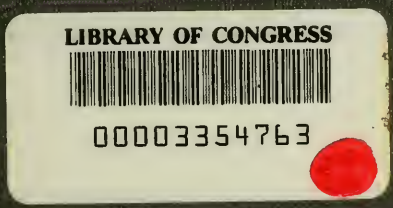

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MOUNT VERNON,

AND

WHAT MAY BE SEEN THERE:

OR, THE

ORPHANS' EXCURSION

TO THE

HOME OF WASHINGTON;

BEING A

DESCRIPTION IN VERSE

OF

THE MORE IMPORTANT RELICS OF THE MANSION, THE BEAUTIFUL SCENERY, AND THE VARIOUS OBJECTS OF INTEREST ABOUT THE PLACE.

HOPING THAT THIS MAY PROVE A PLEASANT AND USEFUL MEANS OF AWAKENING THE INTEREST, AND OF AIDING THE MEMORY OF SUCH AS HAVE BEEN, OR MAY HEREAFTER GO THERE, THE WRITER PUTS IT FORTH FOR WHAT IT IS WORTH.

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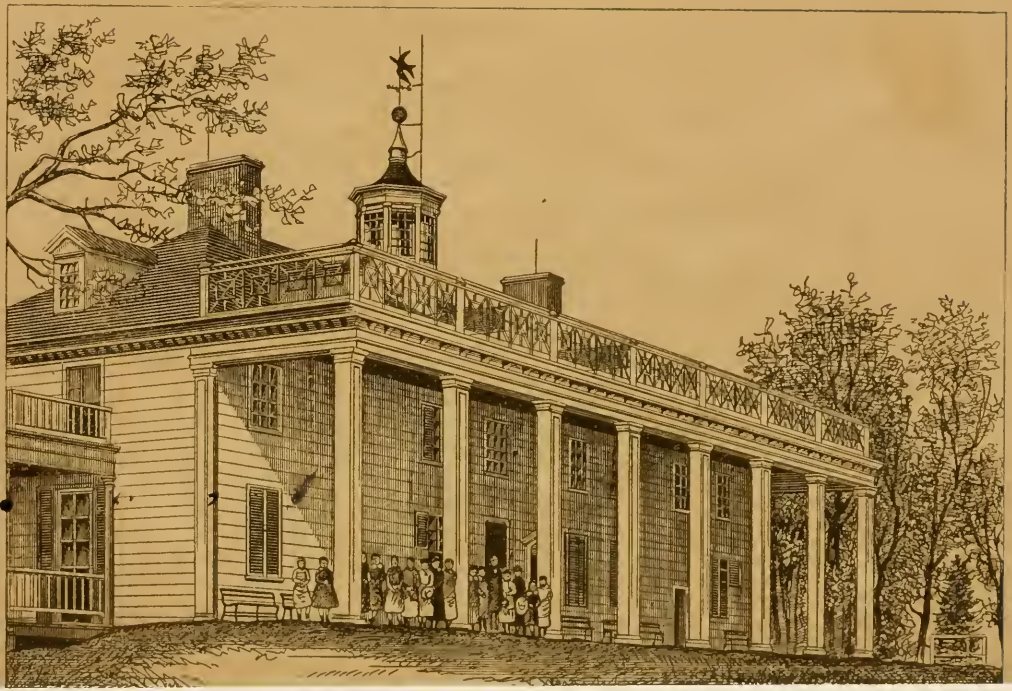
By JOHN B. KELLOGG.

WASHINGTON, D. C.:
C. W. BROWN, PRINTER, 923 F STREET NORTHWEST.
1884.



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PREFACE.

Last Autumn, by Captain BLAKE's invitation, we took a number of our Orphan friends to Mount Vernon. Mr. DILLON photographed us standing on the piazza.

To make the picture a pleasant birthday present to the children, and Christmas present to some of my friends, the following poem was written with no thought of printing it. The task of copying it for each one was so great that my friends advised the printing of it. Hence this printed form.

Being written during the two holiday weeks, amid many interruptions, it was too hastily done to be well done.

It is affectionately dedicated to the orphans of the "Protestant Orphan Asylum." The profits, if any, will be given to them.

JOHN B. KELLOGG.

The Orphans' Excursion to Mount Vernon.

The autumn day was bright and clear,—
None sweeter crowned the fading year,—
And gladness filled each orphan breast,
That they by Captain Blake's request,
Might walk through homestead paths that led
Where Washington was wont to tread.
Through withered leaves, and faded bloom,
Past willows green, they reach the tomb,
Half hidden in the rising ground,
Mid forest trees, and graves around.
Through iron bars they silent gaze
On tablets white that speak his praise;
And marble caskets that enclose
The relics in their last repose.
Then rising still, on our right side
The sloping lawn soon opens wide.
Autumn flowers and fading grass
And scattered trees they quickly pass;
And grand old oak, that in his time,
Battled with winds and storms sublime;
While nothing now but stump below,
And gnarled roots, its vigor show.
Ascending still, at our left hand
The old brick barn and out-sheds stand
Where kind autumn's bounteous hoard,
By th' master's frugal hand was stored.
That spacious barn has often been
The center of a busy scene.

A few steps, and our happy band
Upon the grand piazza stand:
And while they paused, a lovely sight,
The sun's swift pencil dipped in light,
By Dillon's aid had sketched each one
As true as life when it was done.
Their luncheon he did not forget;
The dog was in the picture set.

That best of nature's noblemen
Displayed an eye for beauty, when
He with artistic skill and grace,
Made this rare spot his dwelling place.
From far inland, Potomac brings
The treasures of a thousand springs;
And in his ceaseless, seaward flow,
Spreads wide their shining wealth below.
Beyond, the wooded hills arise,
And far away they greet the skies.
Along the hill the woodlands soar,
And down where ripples kiss the shore,
They lift their heads to sun and breeze,
Nod and whisper to their fellow trees.

Just down the hill a little way,
A vault is found, now in decay.
We enter. It is dark and cold,
With oders here of damp and mold.
The store of ice was treasured here,
To serve when summer heats appear.

The mansion now: The Bastile Key,
Is the first relic that we see.
When La Fayette, by our request,
Became the nation's honored guest,
This relic of tyrannic power,
He left for us as Freedom's dower.
When that key on a victim turned,

Full oft his fate was never learned.
Sometimes a man sent pris'ners there
Who did at last the same fate share.
The northeast room we next invade,
Whereon his chief expense was laid.
Historic paintings grace each wall:
In one that far excels them all,
The general, mounted with his aids,
A coward officer upbraids,
Whose action many lives had cost,
And an important battle lost.
The man seems very loth to linger,
Before the outstretched arm and finger,
The white horse, continental dress,
And vigorous action, all express
A soldier in his early prime,
Peculiar to the olden time.
A harpsichord which stands alone,
When touched, gives forth a weird tone
That seems almost a weeping moan
For old-time owners long since gone.
The old "Bastile," in model form
Of granite, makes a wrathful storm
Within us kindle at the sight:
It was our freedom's glowing light
That banished it to realms of night;
That led the French, e'en to the throne,
In rage, to raze the lowest stone.
This mantle by Canova made,
In sculpture delicate arrayed,
To which Carrara marble lent
Its published grace, a gift, was sent,
By Samuel Vaughn, an English friend;
Thus friendship did with beauty blend.
French pirates seized it on the sea:

When they learned whose the gift would be,
They sent it on its way unharmed.
Thus nobler sentiments have charmed
Pirates, than relic-fiends to day;
For now, because they break away
What'ere they can, a wire screen
Encloses most that can be seen,
To keep the relic-fiend from plunder,
In these days a hogish wonder,—
Who, but for iron bars and stones,
Would carry off the hero's bones.

From the main hall upon the right,
A few quaint things attract the sight:
A parlor, small, with a fire-place,
And book wherein our names we trace:
At left, the stairway of the hall
We pass, on La Fayette to call,
Whose bust, with calm and noble face,
Is chief attraction of the place.
Here Washington stands calm and mute.
Receiving at Trenton a salute.
Here is the Earl of Chatham too,
To colonies oppressed so true.
Then passing on, a room we find,
That was to valued books assigned.
Behind glazed doors in order stood
The treasures of the wise and good.
There's little else attractive found,
Though seventeen closets stand around.
The main hall, and this room, between,
We find installed the household queen.
Her portrait, with it's charming face,
So full of dignity and grace,
Adorns the wall. Others are there,
And fine, but none with her compare.

And "Horse Shoe Falls" with ceaseless pour,
Is here, without Niag'ra's roar.
Beyond the books, a narrow flight
Of stairs we climb—turn to the right—
Into a narrow hall we're led,
And through the slatted door, the bed
Whereon the great man died, is seen.
The relic-hog has often been
Successful here—all things were marred—
With scissors clipped, by jack-knives scarred;
And then at last the door was barred.
One day the keeper, on his round,
Within this room a woman found.
This relic-fiend was stuffed about;
Of stolen things he cleaned her out.
"You may get out, as you got in,"
Said he, and locked the thief within.
He had not from her long withdrawn,
When she and pillow-slips were gone!
Now passing through this narrow hall,
At room of La Fayette we call:
But only through the slatted door
Could look, as at the room before;
Because the relic-fiend would steal
Some thing, and no compunction feel.
Each time, when La Fayette was guest,
'Twas here he found his nightly rest.
It is arrayed as it had been
irst ordered by the household queen.
"full-length" sketch of Washington,
By Stuart's master-hand was done,
And then by Ormsby's graver traced;
That noble picture here is placed.
A fine engraving, by Leroux,
Of La Fayette, hangs here too.

A small guest-chamber next appears:
Things of revolutionary years.
As relics, hang on every side,
And tell how souls of men were tried.
In here Canova's Washington
Sits with a Roman toga on.
His sword now lies beneath his feet:
Recording laws, on tablet neat,
He is a statesman now complete.
The other rooms upon this floor
Afford but little to explore.
A narrow stairway leads above
Where lady Martha mourned her love,
Whose tomb could easily be seen
In winter's snow and summer's green.
That room she never occupied,
Wherein her husband drooped and died.
Death came and took him from her sight,
And spread o'er her the mourning night.

There still remain, on this third floor,
For us to see, four chambers more.
Some day these rooms may overflow
With things we would be glad to know.
But now appear but tame and bare
Of relics, either rich or rare.
By winding steps again we rise—
And from the tower feast our eyes,
With hill and dale, and mountain-land,
And with Potomac's sweep so grand:
The Capitol and Monument
Are in the landscape prominent.
Forts Washington and Foot are near,
And farms on every side appear;
And steamers, tugs, and ferryboats,
And every craft that commerce floats.

Due west, a half a mile or more,
The porter watched: his watching o'er,
He's joined his much loved master's sleep,
And now the stars his vigil keep.
Of this fine scene there's much to tell;
But we can now no longer dwell.
And now, by this curved colonnade,
The quaint old kitchen we invade:
See this black crane with pot-hooks hung,
Where may a kettle bub'ling sung
Its cheerful tune, o'er blazing fire,
To serve the appetite's desire.
And every one is sure to note
The quaint old chimney's monstrous throat,
So wide, indeed, its gaping hollow,
With ease might all the servants swallow.
The narrow jambs, the low Dutch range,
To modern eyes seem very strange.
The cook would think she roughly fared
If dinners now were so prepared.
What music through the kitchen sounded,
When the hominy was pounded.
The mortar made the rafters ring,
When'er the pestle beat the thing.
Here too are rooms for milk and meat,
And all that made home-life complete.
The northern colonnade extends
The corner, and in a kitchen ends.
When extra dinners were in need,
Because there were more guests to feed,
This kitchen too was put to use,
To roast, chick, turkey, pig, or goose
Beneath this roof, the butler's store,
(A needful stock in days of yore,)
Was kept. For when they came to dine,

Their friends must have a drink of wine.
A bacchanalian fashion sure,
That curses homes of rich and poor.
Around the lawn a carriage-drive
Shows that the master was alive
To all that makes a home-life sweet:
The cooling shade for summer's heat,
From aged trees, is shading yet,—
The trees which his own hand had set.
The fine magnolia, standing near
The butler's house, year after year,
Has scattered its broad shining robe
In sweet mementoes o'er the globe:
The hemlock, poplar, gum, and pine,
Mimosa, aspen, all combine,
With linden, beech, and the wild cherry,
To charm with blossom, leaf and berry.
The garden next: We enter here
Twixt four large trees, still standing near.
From it no gate the stranger locks;
'Tis trimmed by double hedge of box
On either side, square cut and high,
And flat at top. The practiced eye
Will quick discern, that they have been,
Long tenants,—many seasons seen.
Near four feet high, and three feet wide,
With glossy leaves on every side,
They have an artificial look,
That always shows the pruning hook.
These hedges have been left unchanged
In forms that Washington arranged.
These passed, and this conservatory,
Which keeps some plants in summer glory,
When hill and dale are clad in snow,
Will now its varied beauties show.

It is quite past their blooming time,
Though some just now are in their prime.
Geraniums, and flow'ring maple,
Which may be considered staple,
So common are they everywhere,
Smile, or breathe fragrance on the air.
Here, a monthly rose is glowing;
There, "Mary Washingtons" are growing
In pots, to bloom on every hand,
Mid loving friends, through all the land;
For hundreds are sold every year,
To friendly ones who visit here.
This Passion Flower, widespreading round,
In South America first was found;
And in its charming grace alone
Excels th' beauty of our own.
'Tis now beyond it's blooming day,
Though creeping on its verdant way.
This corner holds a lemon-tree,
And real lemons there you see.
This sago-palm, and century-plant
Are of the rare, and very scant
Remains, that still, in health, survive
The fire of eighteen thirty-five.
And now south side of this sweet lawn,
Around a rustic table drawn,
We take our lunch—near these large trees—
Of sardines, sandwiches and cheese:
Then throng around the crystal well—
Slake our thirst—hark! 'tis not a bell—
The steamer's gong is long and loud,
Inviting back the curious crowd.

A SKETCH OF THE ORPHANS IN THE PHOTOGRAPH

[No. 1 on the left, No. 2 next, and so on.]

No. 1. Miss Florence Tenly heads the list;
Twelve flowing years her cheeks have kissed.
Her fine dark hair, her bright blue eye,
Her well set head and forehead high,
Her mouth that utters pleasant words,
Her voice that hath the ring of birds,
Bespeak for this, our little maid,
A soul for sweet refinement made:
With an active mind, and self-possessed,
She must be placed among our best.

No. 2. Miss Lizzie Hatcher's dark brown eyes,
Wherein much latent mischief lies,
Are suited well to her black hair,
Smooth features, and complexion fair.
Over her head twelve years have past,
And now her teens are coming fast.
This cheerful, sportive little maid,
For song an early taste displayed.

No. 3. Miss Lizzie Weble long we've known,
From childhood till a woman grown:
A girl of stout good will possessed;—
Whate'er her task she did her best:
And now she plies, with equal ease,
The needle or piano keys.
A short, thick set, true German lass;
Blue eyes, and teeth that few surpass,—
So reticent,—a hasty word
From *her* lips *we* have never heard.

No. 4. Miss Lily Bailey, tall and fair,
With eyes of blue, and darkish hair,
Has a kind heart and much good sense,
With natural love of excellence:
At piano-practice takes her turn,
In which she is not slow to learn.

No. 5. In Mamie Vessey, now fourteen,
A quick intelligence is seen.
A bright dark eye, with kindly tone,
That makes you wish it were your own.
She's tall and trim, with raven hair,
And always neat—complexion fair:
By doing different things at will,
Displays a good mechanic skill.

No. 6. Miss Anna Goerner at sixteen,
Sees this life's most enchanting scene:
A blonde is she, blue-eyed and fair,
Her eyes and face show humor there;
Sometimes original and droll,
And oft with laughter fills the soul.
She's good to work, and kind, and free,
And doeth all these cheerfully.

No. 7. Miss Anna Shafe, now fourteen;—
An age that stands half way between
That point of time when every lass
Is said to be "'twixt hay and grass."
Dark hair, and pleasant dark brown eyes,
A tongue that oft too rapid flies,
And makes the sense obscure. Less speed
The kind-hearted girl stands in need.
She's strong and fat, and good to work;
Too fond of play—but not a shirk.

No. 8. Miss Anna McIntosh appears
To be a girl of fourteen years.
She's tall, with eyes 'twixt brown and gray,
Where cheerfulness is wont to play;
So free from faults and aught unkind,
In every one a friend she'll find.

No. 9. Miss Fanny Westnedge, just sixteen.
Tho' plump, is neither fat nor lean;
Her eyes, wherein the blue prevails,
Which some occult disease assails,
Give her a shy, retiring air—
As if to hide some thing with care.
Her eyes are large, and they are bright.
And do not show defective sight.
A pleasant and kind-hearted girl,
That may become a precious pearl.

No. 10. Next on our list Miss Rosa Green,
A black-eyed girl about fourteen;
A slender, keen, half brunette;
Her eyes are small, her teeth well set.
She's quick, sharp, wiry and strong,
And free to work the whole day long:
She talks but little, thinks the more;
Presents her own from stock in store.
Her culture what the street could give,
Till she with th' orphans came to live.
It gives us great pleasure to believe
None better now the past retrieve.

No. 11. Miss Rosa Thompson's thirteen years
Were greatly marred by early tears;
The cup its baleful power spread
O'er all her home—its joys were dead.
We hope temp'rance and peace may come,

And joy again smile on her home.
Dark hair, blue eyes—not quite brunette;
Small but full—nothing to regret.
She has a heart that's free from guile,
And face that kindles with a smile.
Sensible and sure to be polite,
Would shun the wrong and do the right.

No. 12. Miss Lotta Hamil, past thirteen,
Though small, is always plump and clean;
Her hair is dark, her eyes are gray,
And mirth makes wrinkles round them play;
Whatever she may undertake,
That thing she will be sure to make.
She is a girl of much self-poise,
Does everything without much noise;
Sometimes too quick, but on the whole,
She's surely gaining self-control.
There's sure success in life for her
When she's her own brave conqueror.

No. 13. Miss Mary Moreland at sixteen,
Is her own heart's most royal queen;
Every tenant should obey her will:
When she commands them, "Peace be still!"
Blue eyes, brown hair, and rosy cheek,
With rounded form, good health bespeak.
She's free to every kind of labor—
With right good will helps she her neighbor—
With cheerful smiles she lights her way,
And blesses all each passing day.

No. 14. Miss Stella Wagner, 'mong these few,
Has also sparkling eyes of blue;
Of all these girls the most petite,
With features fair, and plump and neat;,

She's shrewd, and sharp, and quick and smart,
And never loth to do her part.

No. 15. Miss Cora Graham now appears,
In her full tide of fourteen years;
She has dark red hair, light brown eyes,
And much expression in them lies;
Short neck, and shoulders broad and square;
Large head, complexion very fair;
All her limbs are round and well filled,
A girl of short and sturdy build:
Physical beauty is not her forte:
As model, the artist would not court:
Her Ambition to win and rise,
Is where her greatest beauty lies;
Her mind is quick—memory strong—
Not many faults to her belong;
Not slow to feel, nor to resent,
And mostly swayed by good intent.
A girl of strong points, but will need
Much self-control would she succeed.

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